

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 BONN 04373 01 OF 02 181427Z

44

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07

L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

ACDA-05 NIC-01 SAJ-01 OMB-01 /075 W

----- 101668

R 181415Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8746

INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN

USMISSION USBERLIN

AMCONSUL BREMEN

AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

AMCONSUL MUNICH

AMCONSUL STUTTGART

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 01 OF 02 BONN 04373

TAGS: PINT, GW

SUBJECT: FRANZ JOSEF STRAUSS AND THE CHANCELLOR
CANDIDATE ISSUE

REF: BONN 3440, MUNICH 0454, BONN 4240

SUMMARY: THE DISCLOSURE OF A "SECRET" SPEECH BY FRANZ JOSEF STRAUSS TO CSU FUNCTIONARIES LAST NOVEMBER AND THE BAVARIAN CSU LEADER'S PERFORMANCE IN THE RECENT BUNDESTAG DEBATE ON INTERNAL SECURITY HAVE PROBABLY REDUCED HIS CHANCES TO BECOME OPPOSITION CHANCELLOR CANDIDATE IN THE 1976 NATIONAL ELECTIONS. IN THE SONT-HOFEN SPEECH, STRAUSS ADVISED AGAINST HELPING THE GOVERNMENT SOLVE MAJOR PROBLEMS FACED BY GERMANY AND SUGGESTED THAT THE SITUATION BE ALLOWED TO REACH CRISIS PROPORTIONS IN ORDER TO ASSURE UNION VICTORY NEXT YEAR. HE ALSO PROPOSED TO PLAY UPON THE FEARS OF THE GERMAN PUBLIC CONCERNING INTERNAL SECURITY. FOLLOWING THE PUBLICATION, STRAUSS ONLY HALF HEARTEDLY

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 BONN 04373 01 OF 02 181427Z

DENIED HAVING MADE SUCH STATEMENTS IN SONT-HOFEN, AND

HIS PERFORMANCE DURING THE INTERNAL SECURITY DEBATE CONFIRMED, AT LEAST IN PART, THAT HE WAS PRACTICING WHAT HE PREACHED IN THE NOVEMBER SPEECH. NOBODY IS SURE WHETHER STRAUSS, IN FACT, WANTS TO BE THE CANDIDATE (E.G., HE RECENTLY DENIED SEEKING THE NOMINATION BUT HINTED THAT HE WOULD SERVE IF CALLED UPON). EVEN IF STRAUSS DOES NOT SEEK THE NOMINATION, THERE WILL BE TOUGH NEGOTIATIONS ABOUT A JOINT CDU/CSU PARTY PROGRAM FOR THE 1976 ELECTIONS. END SUMMARY

1. THE MARCH 10 ISSUE OF "SPIEGEL" CARRIED A COVER SPEECH HE HAD MADE TO CSU FUNCTIONARIES, NOVEMBER 19, 1974.

2. IN THE SPEECH (STRAUSS ONLY HALF HEARTEDLY DENIED "SPIEGEL'S" VERSION IN A PRESS CONFERENCE MARCH 10), THE BAVARIAN CSU LEADER OUTLINED THE STRATEGY FOR THE OPPOSITION. HE PROPOSED THAT THE CDU/CSU SHOULD NOT COOPERATE WITH THE GOVERNMENT IN SOLVING MAJOR PROBLEMS, SUCH AS INFLATION, UNEMPLOYMENT AND INTERNAL SECURITY, BUT SHOULD LET THE SITUATION DEVELOP INTO CRISIS PROPORTIONS. HE SUGGESTED THAT THE CDU/CSU CONCENTRATE ON ATTACKING THE SOCIAL-LIBERAL COALITION RATHER THAN PROPOSING ALTERNATIVE PROGRAMS AND CALLED UPON THE OPPOSITION TO PLAY ON THE FEARS AND INSECURITY OF THE GERMAN PUBLIC ABOUT POLITICAL TERRORISM.

3. STRAUSS ALSO ACCUSED BARZEL AND KOHL OF BEING WILLING TO COOPERATE WITH THE SPD. IN THE CASE OF BARZEL, HE CLAIMED THE FORMER UNION CHANCELLOR CANDIDATE HAD ACTUALLY DISCUSSED THE POSSIBILITY OF ESTABLISHING A FOURTH PARTY THAT WOULD JOIN THE SPD IN A FUTURE COALITION. NOT SURPRISINGLY, THE DISCLOSURE OF STRAUSS' SPEECH CREATED CONSTERNATION WITHIN THE CDU AND PROVIDED THE SPD WITH A CONVENIENT TARGET. THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS AND LIBERALS WASTED NO TIME IN ATTACKING STRAUSS AND CLAIMING THAT THE SONTHOFEN SPEECH WAS EVIDENCE OF HIS IRRESPONSIBILITY AND RUTHLESSNESS.

4. DURING THE BUNDESTAG DEBATE ON INTERNAL SECURITY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 BONN 04373 01 OF 02 181427Z

MARCH 13, STRAUSS' BITTER ATTACK AGAINST WILLY BRANDT AND THE SPD CONFIRMED, AT LEAST PARTIALLY, THAT HE WAS ADHERING TO THE SONTHOFEN STRATEGY. ALTHOUGH EARLIER IN THE DEBATE HELMUT KOHL HAD DEFENDED STRAUSS, POLARIZATION OF THE ISSUES WAS NOT WHAT THE CDU LEADERS WANTED. AN INDICATION OF THIS WAS THAT THE FIRST OPPOSITION SPEAKER, ALFRED DREGGER, A VOCAL CRITIC OF THE GOVERNMENT AND CLOSE TO STRAUSS ON MOST ISSUES,

WAS RESTRAINED IN ATTACKING THE GOVERNMENT. NEVERTHE-
LESS, THE CDU/CSU WALKED OUT IN PROTEST OF SPD FRAKTION
LEADER WEHNER'S REMARKS ABOUT STRAUSS DURING THE
DEBATE.

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 BONN 04373 02 OF 02 181431Z

44

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07

L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

ACDA-05 NIC-01 SAJ-01 OMB-01 /075 W

----- 101686

R 181415Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8747

INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN

USMISSION USBERLIN

AMCONSUL BREMEN

AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

AMCONSUL MUNICH

AMCONSUL STUTTGART

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 02 OF 02 BONN 04373

5. THE SONTHOFEN SPEECH DISCLOSURES AS WELL AS
STRAUSS' PERFORMANCE IN THE BUNDESTAG DEBATE ARE LIKELY
TO MAKE HIM EVEN LESS ACCEPTABLE THAN BEFORE TO A SIG-
NIFICANT SEGMENT WITHIN THE CDU. THESE TWO PERFORMANCES
REFLECT THE DUALISM OF STRAUSS' PERSONALITY. ON THE ONE
HAND, THEY WERE PARTLY BASED ON AN ANALYSIS OF THE
PUBLIC MOOD IN GERMANY WHICH, HE BELIEVES, CALLS
FOR CONFRONTATION AND POLARIZATION VIS-A-VIS THE GOVERN-
MENT AS THE BEST STRATEGY FOR WINNING THE 1976 ELEC-
TIONS. ON THE OTHER HAND, THEY REFLECT ALSO THE LACK
OF DISCIPLINE AND STRAUSS' INABILITY TO RESTRAIN HIM-

SELF. IN ANY EVENT, THEY WILL NOT BE HELPFUL IN OB-TAINING THE SUPPORT OF THE GERMAN MIDDLE-OF-THE ROAD VOTER.

6. A SOURCE IN THE CSU CLOSE TO STRAUSS HAS TOLD US THAT STRAUSS PERSONALLY FEELS UNDER CONSIDERABLE PSY-LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 BONN 04373 02 OF 02 181431Z

CHOLOGICAL PRESSURE AS A RESULT OF THREATS MADE AGAINST HIM AND HIS FAMILY. THE SOURCE BELIEVES THAT GIVEN THESE PERSONAL CONSIDERATIONS STRAUSS MAY NOT WANT TO BE THE UNION'S CHANCELLORSHIP NOMINEE. IN AN INTERVIEW MARCH 13, STRAUSS DENIED THAT HE WAS CAMPAIGN-ING FOR THE NOMINATION BUT DID LEAVE THE DOOR OPEN SHOULD HE BE CALLED UPON TO BE THE CANDIDATE. IN THE SAME INTERVIEW STRAUSS COMMENTED THAT HE THOUGHT THE DECISION AS TO WHO THE UNION CANDIDATE WOULD BE, WOULD BE MADE BEFORE THE JUNE CDU NATIONAL CONVENTION. A CSU POLITICIAN TOLD US, HOWEVER, THAT THE ONLY WAY HE BELIEVED A DECISION COULD BE REACHED BEFORE THE END OF JUNE WOULD BE IF KOHL WERE CHOSEN AS A CANDIDATE. HE COULD NOT BELIEVE, HE SAID, THAT KOHL WOULD BE WILLING TO GO BEFORE A NATIONAL CDU CONVENTION AND ENDORSE FRANZ JOSEF STRAUSS AS THE CHANCELLOR CANDIDATE. EVEN IF STRAUSS, THIS CSU POLITICIAN SAID, DECIDED NOT TO SEEK THE NOMINATION, THE QUESTION OF FORMULATING UNION POLICY POSITIONS ACCEPTABLE TO THE CSU, BEFORE THE JUNE CONVENTION, WOULD BE VERY DIFFICULT. OUR SOURCE FELT THAT IT WAS UNLIKELY THAT STRAUSS WOULD ACCEPT ASSURANCES FROM THE CDU THAT THE POLICY POSI-TIONS THAT EMERGED LATER WOULD, IN PRINCIPLE, CONFORM TO CSU WISHES. THE MAIN STICKING POINT, HE SAID, BETWEEN THE CDU AND THE CSU ON POLICY ISSUES WOULD BE IN THE AREA OF SOCIAL POLICY (I.E., THE FINANCING OF THE EVER MORE EXPENSIVE GERMAN SOCIAL WELFARE STATE).

7. ALTHOUGH THE SONTHOFEN SPEECH, AND TO A LESSER DEGREE THE BUNDESTAG DEBATE, HAVE HURT STRAUSS' CHANCES TO BECOME THE UNION CANDIDATE, THEY DO NOT PER SE RULE OUT A STRAUSS CANDIDACY. STRAUSS, FOR EXAMPLE, WILL TAKE A VERY ACTIVE ROLE IN THE NORTH RHINE-WESTPHALIAN ELECTIONS AND IS LIKELY TO ATTRACT LARGE CROWDS. SHOULD THE CDU BE VICTORIOUS, STRAUSS WILL CLAIM A LARGE SHARE OF THE CREDIT. ANOTHER UNKNOWN FACTOR IS WHAT THE DOMESTIC POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS WOULD BE OF A NEW OUTBREAK OF TERRORIST ACTIVITIES. ALL THIS SAID, STRAUSS WILL HAVE AN EXTREMELY DIFFICULT PATH TO CLIMB IF HE IS TO BECOME THE UNION CANDIDATE. THE SONTHOFEN SPEECH CONFIRMS THAT HE IS OFTEN HIS OWN WORST ENEMY. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 BONN 04373 02 OF 02 181431Z

HILLENBRAND

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: SECURITY, ELECTION CANDIDATES, PARTY LEADERS, PARTY MEETINGS, SPEECHES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 18 MAR 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: MorefiRH
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975BONN04373
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750094-0314
From: BONN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750342/aaaablgly.tel
Line Count: 229
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 BONN 3440, 75 MUNICH 0454, 75 BONN 4240
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: MorefiRH
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 30 MAY 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <30 MAY 2003 by ifshinsr>; APPROVED <02 JUN 2003 by MorefiRH>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: FRANZ JOSEF STRAUSS AND THE CHANCELLOR CANDIDATE ISSUE
TAGS: PINT, GE, CSU, (STRAUSS, FRANZ JOSEF)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006